

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 CAB-02

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01

FAA-00 NSCE-00 IO-13 PM-04 L-03 (ISO) R

DRAFTED BY EB/AVP:JAMES K. GORDON:MG

APPROVED BY S/S-O: SESTEINER

EUR/EE - ILSANDERS (SUBS)

FAA/AIA-130 - ELJETT (SUBS)

CAB/BOR - CBMALOY (SUBS)

ARA/CAR - JTTHYDEN (SUBS)

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O 140614Z NOV 76 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY KINGSTON NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY SOFIA IMMEDIATE

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FOR ACTION AT 0700 LOCAL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, OCLR, US, BU

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: BALKAN AIRLINES FLIGHT CLEARANCE
SUSPENSION

1. DEPARTMENT RECEIVED NOV. 3RD NOTE FROM BULGARIAN
EMBASSY WASHINGTON, REQUESTING FLIGHT/LANDING CLEARANCE
FOR BALKAN AIRLINES FLIGHT CARRYING REPLACEMENT CREWS
FOR BULGARIAN FIGHTING BOATS. DEPARTMENT RESPONDED BY NOTE
OFFERING OFFSHORE ROUTE WHICH REQUIRED NO US CLEARANCE.
BULGARIANS DEMURRED, CITING EXTREME DISTANCE AND EMPHASIZING
NEED FOR FUEL STOP. WE THEN REQUESTED ASSURANCES THAT
TU-154 AIRCRAFT WAS MAINTAINED UNDER STANDARDS EQUAL TO
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ICAO MINIMUM STANDARD, AND THE EMBASSY GAVE US A NOTE TO

THAT EFFECT. ON THIS BASIS, DEPARTMENT GAVE ORAL CLEARANCE, AND ROUTE GANDER-BOSTON-KINGSTON.

2. NOV. 13TH FLIGHT WAS APPARENTLY CONDUCTED WITHOUT COORDINATION BETWEEN BULGARIAN EMBASSY AND AUTHORITIES IN SOFIA. PILOT DID NOT FOLLOW APPROVED ROUTE PREPARED BY FAA AND PASSED TO BULGARIANS BY DEPARTMENT. PILOT ATTEMPTED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO MAKE REFUELING STOP AT BALTIMORE, INSTEAD OF BOSTON AS INSTRUCTED. WHILE ON GROUND, AIRCRAFT WAS FOUND TO BE EQUIPPED ONLY WITH VOR AND ADF NAVIGATION AIDS AND HF RADIO. (THESE NAV AIDS ONLY OF

USE IN FLIGHT OVER LAND, NOT IN INTERNATIONAL SERVICE.) PILOT REFUSED FAA'S ROUTE FROM BOSTON TO KINGSTON ON BASIS THAT AIRCRAFT NOT EQUIPPED FOR FLIGHT OVER WATER. (WE AGREE, AND WONDER AT PILOT'S LUCK IN MAKING SAFE FLIGHT FROM SHANNON, IRELAND, TO GANDER, NEWFOUNDLAND.) FAA PREPARED AN ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE TO ALLOW THE FLIGHT TO PROCEED.

3. PILOT'S STATEMENT AND AIRCRAFT'S LACK OF NAVIGATIONAL EQUIPMENT CALL INTO QUESTION THE ASSURANCES GIVEN US BY THE BULGARIAN EMBASSY. DEPARTMENT, FAA AND NORAD ALSO WILL NEED TO CONSIDER PROPOSED ROUTE OF FLIGHT BEFORE AIRCRAFT MAKES RETURN FLIGHT. WE ARE THEREFORE REVOKING PERMISSION FOR RETURN FLIGHT PENDING FURTHER CLARIFICATION. ORIGINAL PLANS WERE FOR AIRCRAFT TO RETURN ON DAY FOLLOWING ARRIVAL IN KINGSTON. WE ASSUME BALKAN PROPOSES NOV. 14 RETURN FLIGHT.

4. ACTION: DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY KINGSTON ATTEMPTING TO INFORM BALKAN AIRLINES CAPTAIN GRIGOR SOKOLOV THAT CLEARANCE FOR BALKAN AIRLINES FLIGHT KINGSTON-GANDER VIA US AIR SPACE HAS BEEN SUSPENDED. DEPARTMENT IS PREPARED TO DISCUSS MATTER FURTHER ON MONDAY, BUT WE FEEL UNABLE TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE ON BASIS OF ORAL COMMUNICATIONS. KISSINGER

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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04 MAY 2006

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